



Making Changes: My Body

Thinking about making a change or some changes to your current lifestyle?

A good idea when thinking about making a change is to decide what that change would look like.

What do you want to achieve in the long term? What steps do you need to take to achieve this? How will you know when you get there?

You have probably made lots of changes to your lifestyle before. It can be helpful to look at other times you made changes.

How did you do it?

What worked? What didn't?

Was there anything that got in the way?

What were the positives that came about due to that change?

What was helpful?

To get to where you want to go, know where you are now and where you want to be. Making a plan and writing it down is a good idea. Below are some steps to help achieve your goals.

1) Define your goal to change:

State your goal clearly. Be specific. What is your goal?

For example: do you want to improve your fitness? Do you want to change your eating habits? Do you wish you had more energy? Do you want to put more relaxation in your life? How much do you want to change any/all of these areas?

Set achievable and realistic goals that feel manageable. This will increase your confidence.

For example: *I want to eat better meals, I can pack lunches for work and cook meals in the evening and not eat as much takeaway. Or I want to improve my fitness so can start working the dog in the morning before work...*

2) Assess your level of motivation to change

Motivation= How important is it for me to change? I believe I can change? Write a list of why it is important to change.

For example: It is important for me to change my lifestyle because:
I want to increase my level of fitness
I want to feel motivated and less stressed

Re Balance Your Lifestyle

This list may include things such as finances, lifestyle, relationships, family, friends, health, employment, feelings, goals, aspirations, legal issues and any others that may be important to you.

3) Break the change down into stages

It can be helpful to brainstorm ideas on how you plan to change. Steps need to be simple and practical where possible. Develop an action plan.

The plan may include setting a date to change, and exploring other activities you can participate in to avoid falling back into old patterns.

Try to make the plan tailored to you and what is achievable at this time. If it suits you to make small steps towards your change goal then map these out in your plan.

4) Use strategies for change

Find appropriate resources and helpers. This may include asking friends and family for help and support, seeing a Counsellor or joining a support group.

Think of ways to support your change and anticipate slip ups. What can you do when you feel like you're going back to old patterns?

An example of this may be to phone a friend for support or writing a pro's and con's list. You could read your pro's and con's list when you are feeling anxious about the change. Another idea is putting meditation/relaxation in your life.

Explore barriers and develop ways to get around these.

For example:

I like to sleep in so will exercise at after work...

I love takeaway so will only eat it once night a week...

Reward yourself and be proud of yourself. Do something special for you to reward steps along the way and continue doing this as your change progresses. Be proud of your achievements they have taken work.

5) Maintaining Change

You could keep a diary of your change or get a friend to help motivate you. Some people find talking their issues out with their friends helps while others phone a helpline, get counselling or join a support group.

Re Balance Your Lifestyle

Some people pick up new hobbies; take up meditation or yoga to begin to do more things to pamper themselves.

Review outcomes- did things work out as planned? What else could be put in the plan?

6) Reverting to old patterns

Changing patterns can be tough it is quite common to experience set backs at times. If you slip back to your old patterns try not to think of it as a failure but as a learning curve, learn from the experience and continue to move forward again. Why did you revert back to old patterns? What can you do to ensure you get back to your change? Can you do anything different to prevent going back to old patterns again?

Present → Plan → Goal

Changing behaviors can seem difficult but with some planning and motivation it is achievable. Be creative, have fun, be realistic, try to stay positive and in time you will experience the positive effects of the changes you have chosen to make.

You can contact a Counsellor or other professional to guide you through this process.